

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed April 7, 2004.

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a). It was indicated that the lamp heater and non-heated workpiece support of claims 30 and 47 were purportedly not shown. Submitted herewith is proposed new Figure 6 which describes these features. These features are also disclosed in Paragraph [0025] of the specification. In addition, new proposed Paragraph [0051] describes the features in Figure 6 with the appropriate reference numbers.

In addition it was indicated that "shield aligner" element of claim 27 was apparently not shown. This feature is disclosed in Figure 4 as pin 187. The specification at Paragraph [0049] has been amended to include a description of the pin 187. It should be noted that a similar pin was described in U.S. Patent No. 6,440,219 in Figure 5 and column 5, lines 35 etc thereof. The '219 patent was cited in Paragraph [0042] of the present application. In addition, the shield support originally designated with reference "172" has been amended to reference number "182" in Paragraph [0049]. The shield support is shown as element 182 in Figure 4.

Finally, the drawings were objected to on the basis that it did not apparently show the "replaceable shield of comparable weight as the workpiece" feature of claim 41. Applicants submit that that this claim feature is depicted in Figures 3, 4 and 5 and described in the accompanying text in the specification. In particular the drawings show the multi-thermal zone shielding apparatus in the engaged position and disengaged positions as well as the mechanism by which the engagement and disengagement is

achieved. Given that the figures shows both the shield and the workpiece, it is submitted that the claimed "replaceable shield of comparable weight has the workpiece" element is fully supported.

The abstract and specification were also objected to. Specifically, it was stated that the specification included terms which were purportedly not clear, concise and exact. The abstract and specification has been amended in view of the Examiner's comments.

Claims 21-29 and 32-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohmine et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,991,508 in view of Guo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,096,135. These claims have been canceled without prejudice to the filing of a continuing application to pursue the subject matter of these claims.

Claim 30 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohmine et al. in view of Guo et al. as applied above and further in view of Blersch et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,965,047 or Tanaka, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,036,782. Claim 30 has also been canceled without prejudice.

Finally, Claim 31 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohmine et al. in view of Guo et al. and Blersch, et al. or Tanaka, et al. as applied above and further in view of Cheng et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,304,248. Claim 31 has been canceled without prejudice.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 41 – 47 was allowed. Claims 41-47 have been amended to clarify some of the language therein. It is submitted that these claims are still in allowable form.

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In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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